

QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE RESEARCH AND REFERENCES SERVICES OF PARLIAMENTS

Questionnaire adopted by the Association of Secretaries-General of Parliaments at the Spring Meeting 1981. Manila (Philippines)

Rapporteur: Paul Borgniet (National Assembly France)

This questionnaire is limited to the research and reference services within the Parliament which operate under the authority of the Secretaries-General.

It does not cover:

- information provided by the Government or its agencies;
- information acquired directly by Members of Parliament in carrying out their parliamentary responsibilities;
- information which comes from parliamentary groups or political parties.

*

This questionnaire also does not cover, except incidentally, the provision by the parliamentary services of information about the work of the Assembly or its committees which is given to Members, the public or the media for public information purposes.

The subject is, in the excellent words of President HJORTDAL, the work that "the parliamentary services carry out for Members of Parliament in order to assist them in their parliamentary responsibilities".

*
* *

This study is basically concerned with traditional methods of documentation, but it cannot ignore computer-based methods. Modern techniques have altered the way in which information is gathered and used but, at the present stage of development, it seems preferable to limit the inquiry to a simple survey rather than an exhaustive study which would necessitate a different approach.

*
* *

THE RESEARCH AND REFERENCES SERVICES OF PARLIAMENTS**Questionnaire**

Rapporteur: Paul Borgniet (France)

COUNTRY:

Number of members in the House:

In case of a bicameral Parliament, number of Members in each Chamber:

1. Status of the research services

1.1 Are the services a common facility for both Houses?

If not, a separate reply should be provided for each House.

1.2 Are they separate or linked with other services? If the latter, what are their links with other services?

Library

Archives

Committees...

1.3 Date of establishment.

Development since this date.

1.4 Legal nature of the text establishing and regulating these services.

1.5 Hierarchy of authorities under which the services are placed.

Who has direct responsibility for them.

2. Organisation

2.1 Structure of the services. (Please supply a chart showing how the services are organised (organigram)).

2.2 Size and qualifications of staff:

— higher officials with university degree:

— librarians:

— secretaries:

— other staff:

2.3 Premises provided:

Number of Offices:

Total area:

Are there rooms of specialised material?

Location of offices:

— in relation to Members:

— in relation to other reference services.

2.4 Financial resources:

- Budget of the service:
- Proportion of the total parliamentary budget:

3. **Work of the service**

3.1 Who can make requests of the service:

- President, Committees?
- Individual members of Parliament?
- Members' assistants?
- Secretariats of the parliamentary groups?
- Political groups?
- Others (students, officials of the Ministries, etc.)?

3.2 Types of requests made to the service:

- Files of documentation?
- Notes and analyses?
- Statistical or economic studies?
- Draft bills? Amendments? Reports?
- Drafting of questions for written or oral answer?
- Draft speeches?
- Outline replies to parliamentary correspondence?
- Reading lists?
- Other types of request?

3.3 Scope and number of requests:

- Are there restrictions?

If so, what?

Do they cover only national politics, or do they also cover international affairs?

Number of requests:

- In total, for recent years
- Broken down by political party (if available)

Subject areas on which the service is most often consulted (in order of frequency)

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.

3.4 Methods of work:

Does the service work only on demand, from Members or their assistants?

Are there time limits for replying? How are they fixed?

Or does it issue a regular series of notes or studies (give examples)?

If so, who chooses the subjects?

Are the notes and studies provided for Members exclusively drafted in an objective form, or are they sometimes drafted along partisan lines which have been specified by the Member who makes the request?

Can the notes or studies thus provided be considered to be covered by copyright?

4. Documentation

4.1 *Traditional documents* (non-computerised)

4.1.1 Does the service have its own collection of documents separate from that of other reference services?

4.1.2 If so, what documents are in this collection?

— parliamentary documents?

— government documents?

— documents from private organisations?

4.1.3 Methods of classification and conservation?

4.1.4 Does the department have files of documentation? Card indices? Which?

4.2 *Use of microfiche and microfilm*

4.2.1 For what are these services used?

4.2.2 On what scale?

4.2.3 Where can they be consulted (Library, Research services...)

4.2A *Tape recordings or video recordings*

If kept, please give details.

4.3 *Documentation provided by computers*

4.3.1 Is there documentation provided by means of computers?

4.3.2 Is this under the Research Service, or separate?

4.3.3 Resources in terms of staff, offices, computers, terminals and consoles?

Share of total budget.

4.3.4 Are they available in one location, or can they be used directly in the offices of other departments, of parliamentary groups or of Members?

How many terminals?

4.3.5 Do they cover the work of the Assembly?

— Is there an index of names?

- Index of parliamentary business, of questions?
- Who compiles them?
 - 4.3.6 Is there access to external data bases?
 - national?
 - european or international?
 - public or private?
 - 4.3.7 If so, what areas are covered:
 - legal?
 - social?
 - economic and statistical?
 - 4.3.8 Can they carry out calculations and make predictions?
- 4.4 *Arrangements with outside sources of documentation*
 - 4.4.1 What bodies?
 - official bodies (in particular government agencies)
 - private bodies?
 - 4.4.2 Type of arrangements:
 - Official relations?
 - 4.4.3 On a contract basis?
 - Free, or for payment?

5. Consultants or experts

- 5.1 Is use made of consultants or experts?
- 5.2 For use by? (Committees...)
- 5.3 Permanently?
 - Or on an occasional basis?
 - Or on a contract for a certain period?
- 5.4 Who decides?
- 5.5 Who draws up the list?

6. Library

- 6.1 Does your Assembly have its own library or one shared with another parliamentary or other institution?
- 6.2 If the Library is separate from the reference service, what is its annual budget?
 - What proportion does this represent of the total parliamentary budget?
- 6.3 How many works does it contain?
- 6.4 Number of subscriptions to:

- newspapers
- periodicals
- reviews

6.5 What is the staff, by category?

6.6 What are its hours of opening?

- when the House is sitting
- at other times

6.7 What services are provided by the Library?

- loan of books
- preparation of reading lists
- information, by selection of press material (cuttings, summaries)
- etc.